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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 220730Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7952
INFO RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS 2769
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 7143

UNCLAS PARIS 001738

STATE FOR EEB/TPP/MTAA/ABT - MARCELLA SZYMANSKI AND JACK BOBO

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [TBIO](#) [ETRD](#) [KPAO](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: FRANCE AGRICULTURAL BIOTECH OUTREACH PROPOSAL - FY 2010

REF: STATE 122732

¶1. Embassy Paris Country Team presents this request for support from EEB FY 2010 biotech outreach funds for critical public outreach in France. France remains an influential country both in the European Union (EU) and worldwide, especially in francophone developing countries. Post recognizes the discrepancy between France's high level commitment to development objectives, particularly in Africa, and its negative role regarding biotech development, which has impact beyond the EU. A clear indication of France's commitment in world food security policy is the recent election of Luc Guyau as the new President of the FAO Council. Mr. Guyau was previously President of the French Association of the Chambers of Agriculture, and former President of the leading French farmers union, FNSEA.

¶2. The proposed program for a U.S. speaker is based on the successful visit of Dr. Claude Fauquet under an EEB Bureau grant in FY 2009. This Franco-American researcher, Director of the International Laboratory of Tropical Agricultural Biotechnology (ILTAB) at the Danforth Plant Science Center in Saint-Louis, Missouri, visited Paris on June 15-17, 2009.

¶3. The speaker was selected based on previous successful programs, including the organization and partial State Department funding for travel to the United States by Dr. Marc Fellous, and of biotech outreach program speaker, Dr. Martina Newell-McGoughlin, in 2008. Both Fellous and McGoughlin suggested Dr. Fauquet as a speaker.

¶4. Post recommends Dr. Fauquet be selected again as the FY-2010 biotech outreach speaker, as his visit in 2009 was a success. The linkage of development and food security with biotechnology proved to have an impact with the French audiences. We have not succeeded previously in linking agricultural development with biotech, despite our efforts. This allowed Post to attract new audiences on the biotech issue. An editorial published in La France Agricole weekly magazine in June 2009 illustrated Dr. Fauquet's impact on the French audience. The author of this editorial was Philippe Pavard, and an International Visitor alumnus. The speaker's profile was perfect for addressing sensitive topics, given his French background, education, professional experience and language. Moreover, Dr. Fauquet's approach to biotechnology for food security was compelling, given his research and application experience over years in Africa, and the fact that this work was being done under the auspices of a non-profit organization.

¶5. Post estimates travel cost at USD 6,500 for a total of 5 days in March 2010, including 3 days in Paris, 1 day in Montpellier, and 1 day in Brussels, Belgium. This timing would allow Dr. Fauquet to have a large audience (including media coverage) during the annual international agricultural show held in Paris. Targeted audience would include journalists from both popular and agricultural press (to widen Dr. Fauquet press audience from 2009, when only agricultural press was met); the various French government ministries involved in agriculture, development and technology (while in 2009, only French Ministry of Agriculture representatives

were available to meet with Dr. Fauquet); key stakeholders in the development and food security domains in French and international organizations including Paris-based OECD and French FAO members; and researchers and students in Universities focusing in agriculture, development and food security.

¶6. The US Mission to the European Union has cleared this message and also supports the request. USEU will program Dr. Fauquet for meetings with contacts at the EU Institutions.

RIVKIN